



Dr Karen Martin

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

School of Population and Global Health

The University of Western Australia

35 Stirling Highway, Crawley WA 6009

T: 0410324294 E: karen.martin@uwa.edu.au

The Thoughtful Schools Program Evaluation

We are conducting a research project that aims to evaluate the impact of the Thoughtful Schools Program and would like to invite your school to take part in the project.

What is the Thoughtful Schools Program?

The goal of Thoughtful Schools Program is to help schools understand and respond to the impact of adversity and trauma on emotion, behaviour, learning and social skills. The program involves UWA providing the school with a research-based toolkit 'The Thoughtful Schools Program' to guide school based adversity and trauma-informed strategies. The toolkit consists of; i) a self-assessment checklist and planning tool, ii) evidence-based support strategies, and iii) professional development and coaching. The materials and strategies contained within the Thoughtful Schools Program enables the process of becoming trauma-informed for schools to be individualised, place-based, culturally appropriate and context specific. Our research project aims to evaluate the impact of the Thoughtful Schools Program on school and staff practices and policies, and to identify program strengths and areas for improvement.

What does participation in the research project involve?

School participation involves the implementation and evaluation (by UWA) of the Thoughtful Schools Program.

The Thoughtful Schools Program has been developed for use in the following way;

1. Each school forms a Thoughtful Schools Working Group of 3-5 school staff members including a school leader, psychologist, teacher/s, other as appropriate. A parent and student voice is also encouraged.
2. The members ('Champions') of the Working Group use the International Trauma-Informed Practice Principles for Schools (TIPPS) checklist to assess their school culture, policies and practices and prioritise principles to work towards,
3. The Working Group uses results from the TIPPS checklist, Thoughtful Schools Program support strategies, and consultation with the school community to generate an action plan,
4. The TIPPS checklist is reviewed every 6 months and Working Group membership is revised annually.

Your schools participation in the Thoughtful Schools Research Project will involve the following;

- The setting up of a Working Group to review, plan and implement strategies to increase trauma-informed practice at the school. Ideally this group will include a leader, psychologist and teacher. They will be invited to attend a one day workshop during which they will receive intensive training about trauma-informed practice and evidence-based support strategies.

Approval to conduct this research has been provided by the University of Western Australia, in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures. Any person considering participation in this research project, or agreeing to participate, may raise any questions or issues with the researchers at any time. In addition, any person not satisfied with the response of researchers may raise ethics issues or concerns, and may make any complaints about this research project by contacting the Human Ethics Office at the University of Western Australia on (08) 6488 3703 or by emailing to humanethics@uwa.edu.au All research participants are entitled to retain a copy of any Participant Information

They will be educated about the new International Trauma-Informed Practice Principles for Schools (TIPPS) and how to develop an action plan after they have consulted with the school community.

- All the Working Group members will be invited to complete a quantitative questionnaire at two time points. The ARTIC questionnaire (attached) explores staff thoughts about being trauma-informed. This will be completed at the start of the program and post professional development session.
- All Working Group members will be invited to participate in qualitative interviews. These interviews will explore their perspectives on and experiences with the implementation of the program, the TIPPS, any PD or coaching received, as well as barriers or facilitators to trauma-informed practice in the school. These interviews will be approximately 60 minutes and audio recorded with their permission. We will need a private room for these interviews to be completed if staff choose to conduct the interview at the school.
- A sample of 5-10 school teachers will also be invited to participate in the qualitative interviews (approx. one hour) at a location and time convenient to them.

This research may be published in a report and journal article, however the participants and school will not be identified in any way. We will provide project aggregated results to your school.

Is this research approved?

The research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Western Australia (RA/4/20/6041) and has met the policy requirements of the Department of Education (TBC).

Your privacy

All data collected will be anonymous. Comments made in the questionnaire or interview may be used in reports and/or journal articles, however all information will be de-identified (that is no information about the staff or your school will be linked to what you share). The de-identified information you provide will be stored on a password protected computer on a secure network at The University of Western Australia for a minimum of seven years, after which, any paperwork will be shredded and destroyed, and electronic information deleted and erased.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

Your school does not have to take part in this project if you do not want to - participation in this project is entirely voluntary. Should you decide to withdraw your consent, you are free to do so at any stage of the project, without prejudice.

Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the project further?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study the research team, please contact Dr Karen Martin. If you wish to speak with an independent person about the project conduct, please contact the Human Research Ethics Office at The University of Western Australia on (08) 6488 3703 or by emailing humanethics@uwa.edu.au.

How do I indicate my willingness for our school to be involved?

Approval to conduct this research has been provided by the University of Western Australia, in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures. Any person considering participation in this research project, or agreeing to participate, may raise any questions or issues with the researchers at any time. In addition, any person not satisfied with the response of researchers may raise ethics issues or concerns, and may make any complaints about this research project by contacting the Human Ethics Office at the University of Western Australia on (08) 6488 3703 or by emailing to humanethics@uwa.edu.au All research participants are entitled to retain a copy of any Participant Information

If you have read this information letter, the Thoughtful Schools summary and all your project questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you are willing for the school to participate, please complete the attached School Consent Form and email as per instructions on the form. This information letter is for you to keep.

Thank you for your time and for considering your schools involvement in this important research.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KM Martin', written in a cursive style.

Karen Martin